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SPEECH

OF

*John Allan*  
MR. C. ALLAN, OF KENTUCKY,

ON THE

PROPRIETY OF REDUCING THE EXPENSES AND CORRECTING THE ABUSES

OF

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT,

AND UPON

THE DANGEROUS ADVANCES OF EXECUTIVE POWER UPON THE LIBERTIES  
OF THE PEOPLE,

AN

IN REPLY TO MR. CAMBRELENG AND MR. FRENCH:

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

TUESDAY, MAY 24, 1836.

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WASHINGTON:

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER OFFICE.

1836.

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## SPEECH.

The fortification bill (No. 325) and the proposition of retrenchment\* offered as an amendment thereto, being before the committee—

Mr. ALLAN said: Mr. Chairman, being in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and the grant of the money of the People for the supply of the Government, and the proposition for retrenchment which I have had the honor to offer, being the subjects of consideration, the conduct of the Government in all its departments, as well as the propriety of reducing its expenditure, are relevant and proper topics of discussion in this present debate.

The effort that has been made to curtail the freedom of speech, and to exclude amendments from the appropriation bills during the present session, is one of the remarkable signs of the times.

From the earliest date of British liberty, free discussion was allowed on money bills. The public purse being in the hands of the Commons, was the great principle of English liberty. It was the effective engine by which the Commons maintained the authority of the People in the Government, and restrained the power of the King. The supply bills have ever been the field upon which the battles between liberty and power have been fought. Yet, in the American Republic, when power is thrusting its eager hands into the pockets of the People, their Representatives are rebuked for resistance, and denounced for the exercise of the birthright of every freeman. But as we have already bountifully supplied the demands of power with millions, we have at length arrived at the point where, by common consent, it is agreed to be a lit and proper occasion for a full and free expression of opinion on our public affairs.

Having on another subject given my views on the surplus revenue, the national defences, and the course of the present Administration, at present, before I proceed to the consideration of the plan of retrenchment, I will confine myself to a desultory glance at several principles and practices, and arguments, which the public good requires should be exposed.

Sir, in self-defence I feel it to be my duty to describe the organization of this House, the mode of proceeding, and the effect of the previous question. All this is so very different from legislative proceedings in Kentucky, that it is necessary the People there should be made acquainted with the course of business here, to enable them to judge whether their immediate Representatives have done their duty.

In this I do not intend to cast any individual censure on the Speaker of the House, for he has treated me on all occasions with courtesy and politeness; in the appointment of committees he followed party practice. In the Kentucky Legislature every member can introduce any proposition, or get leave to bring in a bill on any proper subject he may desire, and can have a committee appointed favorable to the proposition, so that its friends may make it in as perfect a form as they can before it is brought before the House; and there the yeas and nays can be had, and the People be informed how every member voted. This is fair legislation; every portion of the People fairly heard, and responsibility fairly secured in conformity with the ancient reasonable law of parliamentary proceeding.

Here, by our Rules, no member can get leave to bring in a bill; the business of the House has all to pass through and receive the sanction of the standing committees. These standing committees, appointed at the commencement of every session by the Speaker, upon strict party principles, are the channels through which every measure is

brought into this House. The Committees of Ways and Means, Foreign Affairs, Military Affairs, Public Lands, and the Judiciary, are the principal doors by which every question enters this House. On each of these committees there are placed three Opposition members and six for the Administration—two for one. Of course the Opposition have no voice to bring forward any thing. The majorities of these committees decide the fate of all the important measures of the session. Whatever they recommend comes into the House under the sanction of the Administration, and of "the party," and is voted through as a matter of course; whatever they report against, is voted down with equal certainty.

The effect of this party organization of the House prevents any member of the Opposition from bringing forward an original proposition; and the *previous* question is used so as to prevent direct votes on amendments to bills which may be pending. For example, on the other day, when the general appropriation bill was before the Committee of the Whole, my friend from Virginia (Mr. MERCER) offered an amendment to divide the proceeds of the public lands, and to limit the cost of the custom-house in the city of New York to \$500,000. The previous question was called, and the amendment cut off, no question being taken on the amendment; the question being, according to our preposterous Rules, on the passage of the bill. So that, by the party organization of the House, and the frequent use of the gag law, the previous question, the dominant party can not only prevent the minority from getting a fair and direct vote, by yeas and nays, but they can so involve their course in mystery as to evade responsibility, and "dodge what questions" they may not choose to record their votes upon.

In the Committee of the Whole on the general appropriation bill, as the only opportunity of bringing forward the measure, I offered the proposition for retrenchment; but in the House, to avoid a direct vote upon it, the previous question was called, and the journal does not show who was for and who against it.

But, sir, that the country may understand the subject, I have offered the proposition a second time, and call upon the House to take the vote by yeas and nays. And if this question is again "dodged" by the previous question, let it be distinctly understood that those who vote for the previous question are against the reduction of the expenses of the Government.

The effect of these modes of proceeding, to involve the course of the members in mystery, and to evade responsibility, is manifest from another view of the subject. A party has been in power more than seven years; the members of which have been professing all the while a desire to amend the Constitution, so that members of Congress should be rendered ineligible to Executive appointments. They have all the time expressed a desire to reduce the expenses of the Government. They now have a majority, they say, of about forty in this House, and yet they cannot show by the journals that they have ever voted for any one of these propositions.

My colleague and friend (Mr. UNDERWOOD) brought in, early in the session, a resolution presenting all these constitutional amendments, yet we cannot either get to discuss or vote on them. Under the party organization of the House and the perverted use of the previous question, it is impossible for my colleagues or myself to have discussed and voted on the great measures upon which the People of Kentucky desire to see the action of Congress.

I will make allusion to another subject characteristic of the times. It has become a part of a general scheme to de-

\* For this proposition, see page 15.



lude and mislead the public mind, for "the party" to assume that their measures are identified with the honor and glory of the country; and every one who dares to oppose any one of these plans, however unwise it may be, is denounced as an enemy to his country. Let us see how time and reason and experience expose this arrogant folly.

In the year 1831, all who were not for reprisals against France were proclaimed to be enemies to this country. On the last night of the last session all who refused to vote three millions of money, to be used at the discretion of the President, and in clear violation of the Constitution, were denounced as the allies of France. Now, all the world plainly sees that, if reprisals had passed, and the money voted, we should now have been in the midst of a French war. It is now evident to all that those who prevented reprisals and refused to vote the money preserved the peace and honor of the country.

Among the signal blessings which a gracious Providence has showered upon our country, none is greater than such a national Senate, given at such a time—a body of the greatest men the world ever saw congregated in a legislative hall. Their debates, for the last five years, will be read with enthusiasm as long as liberty and genius shall live. In future ages they will become a political text-book among the friends of constitutional freedom when all the selfish projects of the present day, for the obtaining of money and office, shall have perished in the forgetfulness of oblivion. The American Senate will go to posterity with the glory of having been the anchor of the vessel of state, in the tempest of all the passions unchained and let loose by the ascendancy of party violence over the Constitution.

The whole country has been filled with the lamentations of the exclusive patriots for the loss of the fortification bill of the last session; and, at this session, the following resolution was proposed:

"Resolved, That the President be requested to cause the Senate to be informed of, 1st. The probable amount that would be necessary for fortifying the lake, maritime, and gulf frontier of the United States, and such points of the land frontier as may require permanent fortification."

And all were denounced as enemies to the country who would not agree to pledge the surplus revenue to this ill-advised measure; when, lo and behold, the enlightened Secretary of War, by the approbation of the President, in his luminous report of the 7th of April, completely demolishes the whole scheme; and the friends of an extensive plan of new fortifications, who had been so liberal in their denunciations of its enemies, were compelled to face to the right-about, a movement which frequent use had made easy and familiar in the evolutions of this Administration.

On the 21st of March, while the application of the public treasure to the erection of new fortifications was all the rage, I took the responsibility of maintaining the impracticability of defending our extensive frontier by fortification; that the system had already been carried too far; that it would lead to a large standing Army; that the true strength of our country was in the hearts of a brave People, and the way to insure success in war was to enable them to concentrate their power wherever danger should approach, by means of steam and roads, with the greatest possible celerity. I have the unexpected pleasure of seeing that every position which I took is sustained in the report of the Secretary of War.

The report of the Secretary has rendered the denunciations against the members of the minority for their opposition to new fortifications as powerless as time has rendered those which were levelled at them for their opposition to reprisals and the grant of the three millions.

It is thus that the opponents of these wild and dangerous schemes stand not only justified by experience and reason, but they have the honor of the sagacity of having foreseen, and the firmness to resist and defeat them in the face of power.

I will notice in this place the systematic attempt made at this session to establish two principles in regard to the appropriation of money which are subversive of the Constitution, and upon the success of which depends the ascendancy of the executive control above that of the legislative in the disposition of the public treasure—principles that have been

contended for from the commencement of the Government by the advocates of the extension of Executive power. The first of these principles was advanced by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SUTHERLAND) as the true doctrine "of the party." It is this: that the recommendation of any of the executive departments of the Government that a certain sum of money should be applied to a particular object, is *prima facie* evidence that the appropriation ought to be made, and that the burden of proof is thrown upon those who maintain the negative!!! The other principle is, that, in making appropriations, Congress should not specifically direct the purposes to which the money shall be applied, but that the grant should be indefinite, and that it should be expended at the discretion of the Executive.

The gentleman from New York, (Mr. CAMBRELENG,) some weeks past, when he made his speech upon the famous three million effort on the last night of the last session, went back for precedents to justify and prove that appropriations should be general and not special, to the days of '98.

The Constitution contains the following clause: "No money shall be drawn from the Treasury but in consequence of appropriations made by law." The People intended by this clause to keep the purse-strings in the hands of their immediate representatives. But this power had in effect been transferred to the Executive, by giving him grants of money to be used at his discretion.

To correct this great abuse and clear violation of the Constitution, Mr. Jefferson, in his very first message to Congress after his election to the Presidency, expresses himself thus:

"In our case, too, of the public contributions intrusted to our direction, it would be prudent to multiply barriers against their dissipation, by appropriating *specific* sums to every *specific* purpose susceptible of definition; by disallowing all applications of money varying from the appropriation in object, or transcending it in amount; by reducing the undefined field of contingencies, and thereby circumscribing discretionary powers over money, and by bringing back to a single department all accountabilities for money, where the examination may be prompt, efficacious, and uniform."

This great constitutional principle of specific appropriations, brought forward by Mr. Jefferson at the commencement of his Administration, has ever since been regarded as the principle, by an adherence to which economy could be maintained in the administration of the finances, and Executive power restrained within the limits of the Constitution.

If the principles now sought to be established should prevail, that is, that Congress was bound to vote all the money demanded by the Departments, unless the negative could be proven, and the grants thus procured not to be limited by specific appropriation, but left in the broad field of Executive discretion, then the provision of the Constitution referred to is useless; it would be as well to authorize the President to draw on the Treasury for all he wanted, and to expend it as he pleased.

The good old doctrine of the Jeffersonian school is that, when the Departments call for appropriations, the burden of proof shall be upon them, and the grant was not to be made unless they convinced Congress, by reason and evidence, of the propriety of what they had recommended; and when the money was voted, the precise object to which it should be applied was defined, leaving no discretion with the President, but making it his duty to see the money was expended according to law, and not according to his will.

I will proceed to show the boundless extravagance to which general grants of money, unguarded by specific appropriations, according to the recommendation of Mr. Jefferson, will lead; and the wide range of power which they place in the hands of the Executive, by enabling him to give fat contracts to his friends. It would be impossible, in the compass of a speech, to describe all the instances of prodigal expenditure by which millions of the public money are annually squandered, by the aid of ambiguous, undefined appropriations, among political partisans; but I will select two cases as specimens, to show the country in what manner this Administration disposes of the public money confided to its discretion. In the year 1832, an act passed authorizing the President of the United States to

cause to be built a good and sufficient bridge across the Potomac river, between this city and Alexandria, and the sum of \$200,000 dollars was appropriated for that object. The act failed to describe the plan of the bridge, or limit its cost; it was left to the discretion of the President. The letting of the contract was advertised, according to the requirements of the law, and was taken by Gilson and Stephens, at the sum of \$1,186,625. They were permitted to proceed upon the work upon a mere verbal contract; and finally failed to execute a written contract, and sold out their bargain to a Mr. O. H. Dibble, in whose favor the plan of the bridge was changed, and the price raised to \$1,350,000, without any new advertisement. In the same loose manner, he was permitted to proceed upon this great work for so large a sum upon a mere verbal understanding. In the mean time, Mr. Baldwin, an experienced engineer, reported that the bridge, upon the plan upon which Mr. Dibble was proceeding, would cost the enormous sum of \$1,791,620. This extraordinary proceeding was arrested by the vigilance of my friend from Virginia, (Mr. MERCER,) who is better informed upon the construction of all works of internal improvement than any man in America. He had this prodigal contract brought before Congress, and exposed its enormity. Congress refused to go on with the work, and paid Mr. Dibble for what he had done. Since which time, a good and sufficient bridge has been completed—for what sum do you suppose, Mr. Chairman, after what you have heard? The sum of \$113,000. The country is indebted mainly to the learned gentleman from Virginia for having saved between four and five millions of dollars.

The other case to which I shall refer is the custom-house now building in the city of New York. In the year 1832, the same gentleman now at the head of the Ways and Means, reported to this House a bill, as chairman of the Committee on Commerce, which passed at that session, and contains the following section:

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury shall be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed, with the approbation of the President of the United States, to purchase a site, and to cause a building to be constructed thereon, to be used as a custom-house in the port of New York, and that the sum of two hundred thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to be applied to the purposes aforesaid."

At the time this bill passed, it attracted no particular notice. It was not intimated that any further appropriation would ever be called for; no one doubting that the sum of \$200,000 would be amply sufficient to buy a lot and build a custom-house. The *real design was concealed from Congress*. And the Secretary, in clear violation of this law, under the direction of the President, instead of buying a lot where they were cheap, as we are now informed by the father of this law he could have done, proceeded to make the purchase on the corner of Wall, Nassau, and Pine streets, in the dearest part of the city, at the price of \$217,500, and to contract for a house, as we are now informed, that would cost a million and a half! It is manifest that the law above referred to authorized no such extravagant proceeding as this. It is perfectly certain that if this profligate expenditure of public money had been disclosed to Congress, the law never would have passed. But the gentleman (Mr. CAMBRELENG) informs us that he disapproved of the purchase of this extravagant lot, and that one near the water would have done as well, and also that he disapproved of the extravagant design of the building. Sir, he was the projector of this law. This abuse of it took place under his own eye, in his own city, of which he now says he very much disapproved. Now, as the gentleman has ever since remained a member of Congress, it is a misfortune to the country that he did not, at the next session, inform Congress of this flagrant extravagance and abuse of the law, of which he now says he so much disapproved. But the gentleman at the next session, in 1833, so far from giving this information, slipped into the general appropriation bill the following weighty lines: "For the erection of a custom-house at New York, \$300,000"

Mark the phraseology. Not in addition to a former appropriation, not to finish the custom-house; but it is for a custom-house. And this year, again, the gentleman has got through the general appropriation bill with an appropriation of \$300,000 more, and the yeas and nays prevented on it by the gentleman's own vote for the previous question. So that already the enormous sum of eight hundred thousand dollars has been appropriated for this house, and the basement-story is not yet done. And after all this, the gentleman makes an effort to throw the whole blame on a former Secretary of the Treasury, who made a contract, as he states, for a house that would have cost a million and a half, but that the present Secretary of the Treasury, more economically given, had been to New York, and had adopted a new plan to curtail the extravagance of the first. It seems that the duty of defending the Administration is confined to the persons who happen to be in at the time. Here is a generous effort to throw the blame on an absent gentleman, who is out of office, and to enlogize the economy of the present Secretary at his expense.

[Here Mr. CAMBRELENG rose to explain, and said that he was surprised at the imputation of a design to assail the former Secretary; that he had several times explained, and he could only account for the observations of the gentleman from Kentucky, by supposing he was absent when he had given the explanations.]

Mr. ALLAN proceeded. Sir, the gentleman is mistaken in supposing that I was absent; I was present, and heard every word he uttered, and have a perfect recollection of all that he said. Sir, I have no intention of either assailing the gentleman's motives or of accusing him of assailing the motives of the former Secretary of the Treasury. With motives I have nothing to do, my business is with facts; and although I intend to make a very free and full commentary upon what the gentleman has said and done in this House, yet my duty in this respect shall not be exercised in a spirit of personal unkindness, because my intercourse with the gentleman has been characterized with politeness on his part. But the influential position which the gentleman's party has assigned him in this House, and the control which he is thereby enabled to exercise over public measures in which my constituents have a deep interest, impose on me the duty of commenting freely and fully upon his course. The gentleman did certainly say that the former Secretary had agreed to an extravagant plan that would have cost a million and a half, of which he disapproved, and that the present Secretary had reduced the plan to a proper scale of economy. I thought this a very strange account of the matter, that two Secretaries should come into conflict upon so important a subject, as we have been informed in a State paper that the Secretary of the Treasury was a mere instrument of the President; neither of the Secretaries, of course, had any thing to do but to execute the orders of the President. I wrote to the present Secretary, Mr. Woodbury, on the subject, and so far from claiming the credit of having altered the plan of the custom-house, he did not even know either what the plan was, or what the cost of the building would be, and promised to write to New York and procure the information which I desired, and which he did, and the two following letters will explain the subject:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, APRIL 23, 1836.

SIR: As promised in my letter of the 23d instant, I now have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a report made to me, under date of the 26th instant, by the acting commissioner of the New York custom-house, containing the remainder of the information respecting the new custom-house building, asked for in your letter of the 22d of the present month.

It is deemed proper to add that the contracts referred to by the commissioner are for the following purposes, to wit: 1st. For the supply of all the cut marble necessary for the completion of the basement story, amounting to \$67,500. 2d. For the supply of all the cut marble necessary for the superstructure above the basement story, together with the shafts for the columns, \$281,585.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obed't serv't,  
LEVI WOODBURY,  
Secretary of the Treasury.

HON. CHILTON ALLAN,  
House of Representatives, Washington.



OFFICE COMMISSION FOR BUILDING CUSTOM-HOUSE,  
New York, April 26, 1836.

SIR: Yours of the 23d inst. was received yesterday. In reply to your inquiries—"1st. What is the length, breadth, and height of the new custom-house?"

The length is 185 feet, exclusive of buttresses and steps on each front; the breadth 90 feet; and the height, from basement floor to top of the eave, 55 feet; to the top of the roof 63 feet.

"2d. What will be the number and cost of the marble columns for the support and decoration of said building?"

There are sixteen doric columns for the porticoes, sixteen corinthian columns for the great hall or rotundo, twenty-two doric columns in the basement, and eighteen doric columns in the rooms of the first, second, and third floors; the prices of which it is now impossible to designate, as in the contracts entered into, (copies of which are with the Department,) the items, or parts, were not specified, but put down in gross; they can, however, be obtained from the contractors. The columns cannot be separated, or their receipt declined; the contract is for the whole together, and they are mostly worked and ready for delivery.

"3d. What will be the cost of the building?"

The superintendent's estimate in November last, forwarded to you, was, for the whole cost of the building, seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars; and he is still fully persuaded that this sum will complete the whole. It is the general opinion here, that, by the contracts already made, the Government receive the marble for \$150,000 less than it could now be contracted for and furnished. The building cannot be materially altered without losing the great advantages of these contracts; the building is now progressing rapidly, and the entire appropriation of \$300,000 will absolutely be necessary.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
WALTER BOWNE,  
Commissioner, &c.

The Hon. LEVI WOODBURY,  
Secretary of the Treasury, Washington.

It has turned out as I anticipated—that there could be no conflict between two Secretaries acting under the orders of the same President. The lot for this House cost \$217,500; the marble \$318,585. There is no general contract; the cost is not limited. The work is progressing at the discretion of the architect; he makes out the annual estimates; and sent here the demand at this session for \$300,000 more. He is the only person who appears to be informed on the subject. Simply upon the act of Congress of 1832, appropriating \$200,000 to buy a lot and build a custom-house, the Executive, in the exercise of his discretion, has determined to build a house in the city of New York, which shall astonish and excite admiration by its extent and magnificence, and which shall be a splendid monument of the arts, to adorn and beautify the great commercial metropolis. This house is merely for the preservation of the books and the accommodation of the clerks and officers of the customs. A plain house near the water, where the lots are cheap, could have been built for the original appropriation of \$200,000. But we now see a house progressing, made of such huge blocks of marble as to require thirty yoke of oxen to haul a single piece. The People can learn from these two cases of the bridge and the custom-house how their affairs are managed; how power seeks every occasion to extend its patronage, and provide profitable contracts for numerous dependents. They will see that their money is thrown out broadcast, as profusely as if it were as plenty as sea water.

In private life it is a safe maxim to count the cost before you begin to build a house; but here a house is undertaken without defining the plan or fixing the price, and the commissioners paid a premium for the amount which they spend.

I will close my remarks on this branch of the subject, by placing the Potomac bridge and the New York custom-house by the side of a sentence in the Inaugural Address of the President, of the 4th of March, 1829. He says:

"The management of the public revenue—that searching operation in all Governments—is among the most delicate and important trusts in ours; and it will, of course, demand no inconsiderable share of my official solicitude. Under every aspect in which it can be considered, it would appear that advantage must result from the observance of a *strict* and faithful economy."

Sir, when you consider the effect of this "*searching*

operation" upon the bridge and the custom-house, you cannot wonder that the same kind of operation has made the expenses of this Administration swell forty-five millions of dollars more than the preceding eight years.—This "*searching operation*" increases in energy as it progresses, and will, from present indications, very soon reach the very bottom of the Treasury. Between twenty and thirty millions have already been appropriated at this session. In my former calculation I took the Secretary's estimates for 1836 at twenty-three millions of dollars, which were made in view of a French war. Now I have but little doubt that the appropriations of this session will exceed the estimates of the Secretary at least twelve millions; if so, the excess of expenditure of this Administration over the previous eight years will be over fifty-seven millions.

It is very true this "*searching operation*" has demanded "*no inconsiderable share of the official solicitude of this Administration*;" and if it has not been conducted exactly in accordance with the former understanding of "*a strict and faithful economy*," yet a strict and faithful regard has been had to the spoils principle. No doubt the honorable gentleman from the city of New York thinks the cost of this custom-house a small matter. When we were on the Navy bill, he sneeringly said the pitiful sum of \$600,000 was game too small to be worthy of the attention of the gentleman from Tennessee, (Mr. BELL.) This is all very natural: our minds are formed by the circumstances around us. The gentleman has been long accustomed to see millions of the national treasure poured out in his State and city. His constituents now have the use of more than twelve millions of the public money without interest, a million to build a custom-house. Under these circumstances, it does not surprise me that the gentleman should have large ideas; and that, being so much used to millions, he should have no patience in counting mere thousands.

I do not know how it is with the gentleman from Tennessee, (Mr. BELL,) as he resides at Nashville, within the limits of the Constitution, but I will undertake to say that the gentleman from the same State (Mr. PEYTON) would think the sum of \$600,000 was game well worthy of his attention, if he could get it to improve the Cumberland river above the upper boundary of the Constitution.

The power of the House of Representatives is fast wasting away to nothing under another alarming innovation, in regard to the appropriation of money. A demand upon the Treasury for a large sum of money was heretofore deemed an affair of sufficient consequence to be brought before Congress by a message from the President of the United States, and to be referred by the House to a standing committee for investigation. Now, the irregular practice has grown up of the heads of the Departments, instead of the President, to call upon a committee of the House, instead of the House, for appropriations. Under this new practice, and at this session, we have seen millions voted away upon a letter passing between the Departments and the committees. I was surprised at the gentleman from North Carolina, (Mr. SPEIGHT,) who, in general, is so correct as to the rules of proceeding, when he asserted that this practice had existed from the commencement of the Government. I deny that any committee has a right to deliberate, or report upon any subject that has not been referred to it by the House. The committees derive all their powers from the House, and the range of their deliberations is confined to such subjects as the House has referred to them. I deny their right to receive a communication from any source whatever, of original propositions except from the House. They have a right, and it is the practice for the Departments to prepare estimates and statements for the committees explanatory of subjects which have been referred to them by the House. And it is this usage that has misled the gentleman from North Carolina. Whenever the design of raising armies and appropriating money originated in the Executive Department, such design was always, until of late years, brought before this House upon the responsibility of the President, and it is the right of every representative to vote upon its reference. But our present chairman of the Ways and Means not only receives notes from the Executive Departments calling for armies, and millions, but

whenever he determines that any of these notes are not properly directed to his committee, he takes the responsibility, without consulting the House, to say which of the other committees they shall go to. In this informal mode of proceeding, we have seen millions appropriated in the compass of a few hours, under a single breeze of excitement.

At this dangerous innovation, the honest indignation of the gentleman from Maine (Mr. Jarvis) rose above party, and he boldly and fearlessly denounced this practice as reducing this House to the condition of an old French Parliament, whose office it was to enregister the decrees of the King. The whole of the improvements of the country, the fortifications, breakwaters, harbors, &c. &c. are progressing; under such vague and general estimates, under such indefinite legislation, power is left in the uncircumscribed field of discretion, to multiply and extend patronage at pleasure.

Sir, on the subject of fortifications a brief statement will show the wild, wasteful, prodigal spirit, which is now, with an unsparing hand, scattering the public treasure to the winds—a spirit that proclaims that it would be better to scourge our land with the devastations of war than to unloose the grip of federal power upon any portion of the contents of the treasury. The average amount of the annual appropriations for fortifications upon the settled policy of the country since the year 1816, is within a fraction of \$700,000. The estimates sent in from the proper department for the year 1835, when it was said there was danger of a French war, were for the sum of \$430,000. The estimates for 1836, in view of a French war, for fortifications, being for two years, the bill for 1835 not having passed, were for the sum of \$1,670,000. And now, when the French war has gone by, and it has been determined to make war on the treasury, to keep the People out of any share of the surplus, what do we behold? Three bills depending before this House: the one now under consideration for the sum of \$3,772,058, and the two bills reported from the Committee on Military Affairs for new fortifications, for the sum of \$2,503,800 more, making, in all, the sum of \$6,225,858! The sum proposed now to be appropriated at this session is nearly half as much as has been appropriated for fortifications for the last twenty years.

The average annual amount for the naval service heretofore has been a fraction less than three and a half millions. The annual naval bill of this session which has passed this House is for \$6,235,367 00. From the above indications, it is evident that federal power, entrenched in the strong ramparts of the treasury, is determined there to make its stand, until it triumphs in the battle of the succession, or expends every dollar in that conflict.

Sir, I disagree with my colleague in the warm approbation which he has expressed for the Fortification bill now before you. It is without example for its prodigal extravagance; and unnecessary, because the enormous amount cannot be expended during the year.

During the year 1834, when labor was comparatively cheap and easy to be procured, only the sum of \$175,617 could be expended out of the appropriation of \$870,594 for fortifications.

Of the Fortification bill of this session \$700,000 is for arming the fortifications. The annual appropriation heretofore for this last object was \$100,000.

There is in the Army bill of this year the sum of \$200,000 for the armament of the fortifications, which has already passed; and the amendment now pending, and to which my colleague has pledged his support, is for \$700,000 more, making in all \$900,000, in place of the \$100,000 heretofore annually applied to this purpose. I do not see the necessity of making this appropriation nine-fold more than has ever been required heretofore, even by this Administration. As all former experience has proven the impracticability of expending the sums demanded at this session upon the public works in the year, there can be no other object in the extravagant appropriations proposed, than to make such a disposition of the public money as to defeat the Land bill. Sir, why are you about to depart from all former usage at this particular time? Why signalize the year 1836 with a prodigality that will swell the expenses of the Government millions beyond even the excesses of the last seven years?

Is it possible that Congress will swing the doors of the treasury wide open, and pour out the public money agreeably to the new demands of power at the approach of a presidential election? For the Army, Navy, and fortifications, nearly ten millions are demanded for this year more than the last.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. CAMBRELENG) gave us notice several times that he intended to speak upon the surplus revenue and expenditure. I was anxious to hear him on these subjects, for I supposed he would avail himself of the occasion to explain to the country why he had delayed so long to bring forward a bill for retrenching the expenses of the Government, and the number of Federal offices, agreeably to his famous report of 1828, upon the adoption of which he and his friends then thought, or *professed* to think, that the very salvation of the country depended. But when the gentleman came to speak he remembered to forget his pledge of retrenchment, which is now eight years old. He must be excused; he has been so busily engaged during this session in preparing bills to increase the number of offices and the salaries in all the Executive Departments, that he has not had time to explain the reasons of his failure to comply with his retrenchment pledge.

He commenced his speech by showing that if the President's rise and *just* recommendation in 1829, to give the public domain to the new States, in whose boundaries it was situated, had been complied with, we should not now have been troubled with a surplus revenue. The public domain was purchased by the blood and treasure of all the States for the common use and benefit of all. Virginia conveyed her vast possessions to the United States for the benefit of all the States, herself included; and yet the gentleman contends it would be just towards Virginia and the other States for Congress to take the common property from all the States, and divide it among a few of them. This agrarian scheme, prostrating as it does every idea of justice and policy, the gentleman knows full well will never be adopted. But the delusion has answered the purpose for some time, and may a little while longer, of raising expectations in the new States which they will never realize, and of casting their political influence in the scale that holds out the promise. The idea of robbing one State of its property to bestow it on another, had its origin in political designs, and will end in political designs; for such a scheme can never succeed unless the people become deranged. It will turn out like the promise of *retrenchment and reform*. The plain *English* of both promises was artifices to get votes and political influence.

The gentleman next proceeded to denounce the legislation of 1816, which has paid off the national debt, and filled the Treasury to overflowing, and stoutly maintained that if the public money was divided, it would corrupt the States! The honorable gentleman seems to have all sorts of horrors at the idea of the corruption which the use of their own money would spread among the People; but the gentleman has no fears that the public money will corrupt the officers of the Executive Government, who now have it in their hands against law, and are using it in violation of law. There is no danger of its corrupting the pet banks, and brokers and stock-jobbers of New York, who now have more than twelve millions of the People's money without interest. There is no danger that they will either use this money in political bribery, or for the unholy purpose of grinding the poor and needy. There is no danger of millions of this money being loaned to political favorites to speculate in Indian reservations. There is no danger that forty millions of public money thus used will transfer the property of the country into a few hands, and build up a lordly aristocracy among us. There is no danger that the present operations of the Federal Treasury will make a single city the mistress of the commercial operations of the whole country, and subject every portion of the Union to enormous exactions in the forms of discounts and exchanges. There is no danger that the labor of the People will have to pay tribute in the brokers' shops in this insulphing commercial emporium. No, sir, the honorable gentleman apprehends no danger from any use of the public money except its division among the People, to whom it



belongs, and there he thinks it would spread universal corruption.

To save the democracy from corruption, the gentleman, with the most *disinterested views in the world*, holds on to the surplus revenue with the grip of death; he will keep it snugly in New York. And here, sir, I will notice one instance of the use of a portion of the public money in that city. The Manhattan Bank, which was smuggled into existence by fraud, has a perpetual charter; of the stock an English nobleman owns over six hundred thousand dollars. This bank held on the 1st of February \$3,067,000 of the People's money on deposit, which, at legal interest, produces \$214,600 annually; of which the Marquis of Carmarthen receives \$70,000 for his share of the spoils. And this is done for the very *laudable* purpose of keeping the money from corrupting the People. A few years ago we were informed by the gentleman and his friends that it was very improper to let foreigners hold stock in the United States Bank, although they paid the Government a large bonus for the privilege. Now we are informed by the same gentleman that it is very proper that foreigners should hold stock in this pet bank, without paying any bonus, and have the use of the money of the People of this country gratis, in the bargain.

After the honorable gentleman had shown and condemned the means by which the surplus in the Treasury had been produced, and shown how its division would corrupt the States, he straightway denied that we would have any surplus whatever to divide. He fell to work on the Treasury, and soon had it bankrupt. The forty millions disappeared under the operation as fast as the number of Falstaff's assailants in Kendal green.

I will give a specimen or two of how the gentleman got clear of the surplus. In the first place, he stood up here, in presence of the assembled representatives of the People, and contended with a grave face that the seven millions of stock which the Government owns in the United States Bank was not safe, and that, in reckoning our means, we ought not to count that fund!!! So the honorable gentleman strikes seven millions out of the account. He next strikes out five millions to pay for the Florida war with a few hundred Indians. This is more than twice as much as was expended in all the Indian wars of the West from 1771 to 1795. And then the gentleman took out ten millions to pay for a war that is to occur hereafter, but did not tell us where. But, after getting clear of \$22,000,000, there was still a large surplus on his hands, which he did not know what to do with, when his friend and colleague (Mr. GILBERT) flew to his assistance with a scheme to spend \$22,000,000 more, to buy muskets for the militia. [Mr. GILBERT rose and said that he did not propose to take that sum; that he had said it would require that amount to arm the whole militia, but that his proposition only extended to a part.] Sir, I am glad to hear the gentleman does not want the whole sum now. These instances will show how the Treasury was to be emptied. From the gentleman's assertion, that there will be no surplus in the Treasury, I will appeal to official documents. In my statement on the 21st of March last, as to the amount of the public funds, I referred to the returns from the Treasury which had then come in, and I did not include the bank stock. By subsequent reports from the Secretary, it appears that there are now in the Treasury \$38,000,000. The Government stock in the Bank of the United States is worth \$8,000,000. Estimated receipts to 1st January next, \$21,000,000, making, in the aggregate, \$80,000,000. Admit that the extravagant spirit that now bears rule should at this session swell the appropriations to the unexampled sum of \$35,000,000, still there will be in the Treasury, on the 1st of January next, \$45,000,000, allowing that there will be in the Treasury at that time \$10,000,000 of unexpended balances. Now I should like the gentleman to descend from the airy region of imagination, and show any error in this calculation.

In prosecuting hostilities against the Treasury, the gentleman makes a most vigilant war minister. Whenever he wants a large sum of money, he forthwith waxes exceedingly valiant, and becomes warlike; but, to do him justice, during almost the whole of last session he was as civil and

as peaceable a gentleman as any one could wish to live by; and only a few days before the close of the session, as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, he made the most sensible speech I ever heard him make, and as sensible a one as I ever heard any one make. It was short, and to the point; both very rare merits in this Hall.

The venerable and learned gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. ADAMS,) called upon him to know why he had not made a report upon our relations with France. I remember the identical words of the reply, for they struck me at the time. The gentleman rose and said, "*as we intend to do nothing, we think it prudent to say nothing.*" I admired the excellence of this speech, because it is not uncommon in the world to hear men play the braggart, and gaseonade, and talk big, just in proportion as they intend to do nothing. But notwithstanding this prudent, pacific speech, on the very next night the gentleman fell so violently into one of his belligerent ways, that it broke out in a peremptory demand for three millions of money, and he became so moody because he could not get the whole sum, that he would not have a part, and exhorted his friends not to answer to their names when they were called, to prevent a quorum from voting, to enable him to withhold from the House the report of the committee of conference. I was present to the last hour of that long-to-be-remembered night session, and confess that I was astonished to hear the gentleman call upon his friends not to vote after midnight, knowing that the gentleman had never on any former occasion refused to vote himself after midnight; and knowing, as I do, that it is his opinion that the Congress does not necessarily end on the 3d of March at midnight. I will not dwell upon what occurred at the last session, but return to this. During the last winter, when that gentleman desired to make heavy pulls on the Treasury, he would take into his head that Admiral Mackan was hovering on the coast, and sometimes seemed to think that his guns were within point-blank shot of the Capitol.

Since the nautical evolutions of the Gallic Admiral have ceased to float in the visions of the gentleman's fervid imagination, his pugnacious apprehensions have worked around to an opposite direction, and one ominous sweep of his finger from Lake Superior to the Gulf of Mexico portended unnumbered direful wars, in some one of which it would be necessary to spend ten millions of dollars. In this brief manner the honorable gentleman disencumbered the land bill of nearly one-half of its contents. The gentleman tells us boldly that a war would do the country less injury than the division of the surplus treasure among the States.

Sir, that it was the deliberate intention at first to make the whole Union tributary to New York, becomes every day more and more evident. As early as the 18th of October, 1833, the agent of the Government appointed to select the deposit banks wrote to a person in New York that, under the new system, "it (the Branch of the United States Bank) will have to become the collector of specie from every quarter of the Union, for the ultimate use of your bank and others who may want it in New York." Yes, sir, here is a project to drain every part of the Union of specie for the benefit of New York. We now see in completion of this scheme twelve millions of the People's money deposited in one city, and the whole Western country constantly drained to keep the public funds concentrated at this point, and we hear the member from that city proclaiming that it would be better to involve the country in war, than to have this New York monopoly broken up; the monopoly by which the specie from all parts of the Union, as well as the public revenue, is conveyed to this favored place.

The great contest of the present day is, whether the public domain shall be divided among the States to strengthen the defences of liberty, or retained in the hands of federal power, to be divided out as spoils in the form of jobs, contracts, and salaries, to secure political influence. The proceeds of the sales of the thousand millions of acres of the public land, devoted to the augmentation of federal patronage, will insure the ultimate triumph of executive and aristocratic power over the liberty of the country. Hence power holds on to the public money and the public lands,



Hence the declaration that war would be preferable to a division of the public money among the States. Hence the presumptuous declaration of the office-holders while they are rioting upon the public money which they hold in violation of law, that if they were forced to give it up it would corrupt the People. Hence the succession of varying schemes which have passed before us since the first Monday of December, with a view to engage public attention, so that the session might be wasted in the consideration of a number of repugnant plans; that nothing should be done, and Congress adjourn and leave the public money in a position to do the political work of "the party."

Three projects were proposed by three eminent politicians, all high in the confidence of power, members of the other branch of the Legislature. One proposed to lay out the surplus public money in the purchase of stocks! Another reported a scheme of distributing the public funds among railroad companies, for the purpose of having the mail carried. While another proposed to get rid of the surplus by building forts. Now, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CAMBRELENG) and his party, in the face of their own admissions, during the whole session, in the face of their own projects of disposing of the surplus revenue, turn round and deny that there will be any surplus to divide! Emboldened by success, the party now confidently imagine that they can pass off the most palpable inconsistencies upon public credulity, under cover of the President's popularity. It may be slow, but a day of accountability will come.

But, sir, there is one view stronger than all others, to show the inconsistency of those who are engaged in the project of keeping the People out of the use of their money. On the one hand, we are told that the whole ought to be appropriated for the use of the General Government; and, on the other hand, we are told, if it be appropriated for the use of the States, it will break all the banks. Yes, sir, according to these gentlemen, if you grant all your money for federal purposes, the pet banks can pay you with ease; but if you make the grant for the use of the States, they will all blow up!

Sir, I will here take leave of the gentleman from New York, and pay my respects to my honorable colleague, (Mr. FRENCH,) who has thought proper to honor me by making almost the whole of his very elaborate speech an answer to one of mine delivered more than two months ago. I will not complain of his going out of his way and against the Rules of the House, on one subject, to answer an argument made on another. But I do not see the necessity the gentleman was under to answer my speech, inasmuch as after two months' deliberation he has not ventured to deny a material fact, or to controvert a principle maintained by me. That the gentleman should have selected me out of all the members of the House to make his speech at, is a little remarkable, considering the long and uninterrupted friendship which he has informed the House has subsisted between us, and considering, also, that the gentleman stands pledged to his constituents to support the same measures that I do to mine. Our districts adjoin, and we represent people not only having precisely the same interests, but agreeing perfectly in the measures which should sustain their interests. I do not know that my colleague and myself differ on any question of national policy. We agree that a national bank is constitutional, and conducive to the preservation of a sound currency. We agree in the constitutionality and expediency of works of internal improvement. We both believe that roads could be made in Kentucky of a national character, as well as in the other States. We both believe the Constitution is in force above as well as below custom-houses. He believes, as I do, that the proceeds of the public lands ought to be divided among the States. We both agree that the condition of the public money ought to be examined into by Congress before the adjournment. Thus situated, being old friends, substantially representing the same people, and agreeing as to all the great measures depending before Congress, I had cherished the hope that the gentleman would have stood side by side with me, and shoulder to shoulder, in pressing these great measures, in which our constituents have so deep an interest, through the House.

That the gentleman should have assumed an attitude of

opposition to me, (in a kind manner, it is true,) is among the strange events of these strange times; not because we differ in principle; not because I have made any argument against the interest of the country; but because, as he says, I have opposed "*his party*," and he, being one of "*the party*," is, in self-defence, bound to answer me. His defence is not of the Constitution, not of the great principles of public policy called for by our constituents, for here we walk together and are agreed. No, the gentleman entered the lists as the champion of his "*party*." My friend is an apt scholar, and has very soon learned the fashion at the metropolis. He quickly ascertained that no matter what measures he advocated, no odds what principles he professed, he would be taken into full communion and fellowship, provided he would defend the party and vote for the successor. He informed the House that he intended to leave his posterity in Kentucky, and that he loved Kentucky better than any place in the world; no doubt this is true, yet I could wish the gentleman had a different way of showing his love. He stands here, from day to day, and sees "*the party*" contriving schemes of extravagance to squander the public money, with a view to deprive the People of the use of any portion of it; yet he is as meek and as gentle as a lamb; his Kentucky blood is not in the slightest degree agitated at those attempts to crush the rights of his constituents.

The other day, in this present debate, he heard the gentleman from New York (Mr. CAMBRELENG) contending that if the money was divided, it would corrupt the People. This daring affront upon the sovereign People did not fire my friend with indignation, and bring him to his feet to vindicate his constituents from the aspersion. No: that was no attack upon the party. The honorable gentleman had to reserve his strength to lay it out against a Kentuckian who was fighting by his side for the measures which he professed to advocate. After a full examination of all the documents, my friend informed the committee that we had a large surplus in the Treasury—enough to divide over twenty millions among the States; yet he listened with perfect composure to the gentleman from New York when he was boldly asserting, in the face of figures and facts, that there was no surplus in the Treasury. Yet the gentleman did not feel it to be his duty to protest against a statement which he knew to be unfounded, and which was made with a view to defeat the just claims of his constituents in their share of the surplus money. The gentleman could look quietly on, and see the great measure which he was sent here to sustain sinking under this statement. Yet the gentleman's love for Kentucky could not induce him to utter a word of remonstrance; all was reserved for me; not because I was against his measures, but against his men. Verily the gentleman does not love Rome less, but he loves Caesar more.

But, after all the gentleman's devotion to his party, after his gallant defence of *his party*, what return has his party made to him? He moved, on three several days, to take up and consider the bill which I had the honor to introduce for the benefit of the old soldiers who fought the battles of the Western country. Where was the gentleman's party on these occasions? They voted him down, and would not let him have even one hour to consider the bill. Yet my friend went between the tellers, with the gentleman from New York, for the previous question on the general appropriation bill, and thereby prevented a motion to strike out \$300,000 for the New York custom-house. While my friend is aiding in the completion of a custom-house in the city of New York, which will cost at least a million of dollars, his party from New York vote to leave the conquerors of the West, in their age and poverty, without a dollar of compensation for all their suffering and all their toils. Again, my friend was elected especially to get from his party an appropriation to make a road from the mouth of Big Sandy to Mount Sterling. Where is the gentleman's party on this subject? They are taking millions for improvements in other States, but they will not grant my friend a dollar for his road. He may hope for it, but I tell him now that they do not intend to give him a cent. So that my friend is engaged in a most hopeless undertaking. He stands by his party, but they will not stand by him.

If the gentleman had reserved some of his eloquence to vindicate the rights of his constituents, and to bring his party to a sense of justice, he would have stood a much better chance of success. My friend occupies the strange ground here of supporting the men who oppose every measure which the People of Kentucky think connected with their dearest interests. I do not know what consolation the gentleman can take in this unless he, too, thinks it "a sufficient glory to serve under such a chief."

I will now proceed, in the same kind and friendly spirit manifested to me by the gentleman, to a nearer view of his speech. He again brings forward the letter of General Jackson to President Monroe; in which General Jackson advises Mr. Monroe, "in the selection of the public officers, to avoid party and party feeling. Advises him 'to crush the monster called party spirit.' Tells him that 'the Chief Magistrate of a great and powerful nation should never indulge in party feelings; that he should be liberal and disinterested, bearing in mind that he acts 'for the whole, and not for a part, of the community.'" This celebrated letter was written in 1816, and was republished in all the papers of the party throughout America, while General Jackson was electioneering for the office of Chief Magistrate, as containing the principles and pledges upon which he would administer the Government if elected. Now, that every principle and pledge in this letter have been violated; that all appointments have been made with a view to party; that every man in the nation has been proscribed who did not belong to the party; that the monster called party spirit, so far from being crushed, has scattered throughout the land firebrands of discord, and caused party passions to blaze with increased fierceness, are truths that no one questions.

My colleague, perhaps, did not observe that all the members of his party, in their speeches, prudently went round the Monroe letter; that upon this subject they were as silent as the tomb. Perhaps he did not know that for the last five years not one was found in this House who ventured to deny that every principle and pledge in the Monroe letter had been disregarded in practice. If my colleague had observed these things, he would not have taken a post which had been abandoned by every one; he would not have undertaken the defence of his party upon a point where he cannot find a single man that will stand by his side.

But as the gentleman entered the lists, not to sustain the rights of his constituents, but to defend his party, he had a chance of showing his zeal, if not his discretion, in taking up the Monroe letter; and if he has not been able to reconcile the professions and practices of his party, it has afforded him a notable occasion to show the strength of his devotion. But let us see what the gentleman has made of the letter. The point in issue was between the *profession* that, in the selection of public officers, party and party feelings should be avoided, and the *practice* which selected none but partisans. In the very first move my friend bears off from this issue, and turns to other parts of the letter, upon quite different subjects, and discourses about Western lands and Indians, the public debt, &c. &c.; but when the gentleman got back from his irrelevant digression, as he could not prove the consistency between the President's profession and practice, he boldly abandons the profession and justifies the practice.

In his advice to Mr. Monroe, General Jackson said: "Every thing depends on the selection of your ministry. In every selection party and party feelings should be avoided." My colleague said, "all statesmen of all parties concede the right to the President to select from the ranks of his political friends the heads of departments. How can two walk together except they be agreed?" The gentleman's tone has altered. In 1828, when he was electioneering for the office of elector, he eulogized General Jackson for the elevated and liberal principle, that in the selection of the heads of departments party should be avoided. Now, he says, all statesmen agree that the departments should be filled with partisans. That the gentleman, in opposition to his own professions in 1828, in the face of the principles of the President, contained in the letter which he held in his hand, should say that all statesmen of all parties agree that cabinet ministers should be partisans, is but

the beginning of the difficulty in which he has involved himself by undertaking to make a whole hog defence of the Administration.

My colleague then proceeded, in direct opposition to what he had advanced in the sentence before, to say: "It is true, sir, that all the citizens of the United States are equally eligible to office, and entitled to equal benefits 'from the Government';" and went on to prove that equal justice had been done to all parties in the distribution of offices. He said that he had inquired of the most intelligent citizens of this city, and had been informed by them that the Opposition have their due proportion of offices throughout the Union. I should have been pleased if my friend had given the names of his witnesses. I should like to know if they are not office-holders, in the receipt of the spoils. I very much regret that a statesman from Kentucky should have been reduced to the necessity of making such an inquiry in this city, and of founding a grave argument upon the testimony of witnesses whose names he has thought proper to keep to himself. Does not every body know, as well as the gentleman's nameless witnesses under the eaves of the palace, what is the truth on the subject? What is the question? It is this: In the appointment of public officers, "have characters been selected most conspicuous for their probity, virtue, capacity, and firmness, 'without regard to party,' agreeably to the solemn pledge which had been given, and upon the faith of which the present Chief Magistrate was elected? Now, my friend knows perfectly well, what every one knows, that no individual has been selected to fill office but a devoted partisan; yet he goes into the purlieus of the palace to inquire for information. If the gentleman did not know, he ought to have consulted the public records; there he would have found who had been appointed home and foreign ministers, judges of courts, and to all the offices in the nation. But, when the gentleman leaves his Washington City testimony, and relies on his own knowledge, and takes a range throughout the land to find instances to prove that, in the selection of public officers, no regard has been had to party, he has found two signal cases in the Western country, both of which occurred in the county in which I live. He says that Col. Coleby II. Taylor and James Pace, Opposition men, were appointed postmasters by this disinterested and liberal Administration. The gentleman has been very unfortunate in his allusion to the Post Office patronage in Clark county, as will appear in the sequel. I would not myself have voluntarily made any allusion to the subject; but as it has been introduced for the purpose of proving that, in the appointment of public officers, this Administration has had "no regard to party or party spirit," the whole truth must come out. The post office at Col. Taylor's is in the county where no Jackson man lives. The office yields no profit of consequence. Col. Taylor did not take the office with any view of making money; he is a very obliging gentleman, and agreed to take the office merely with a view to accommodate his neighbors. The office at Pace's was in all respects similarly situated. These being the only cases in the whole Western country that the researches of my friend could find where Opposition men had received appointments from this Administration, could any thing prove more clearly how hard he was pressed, than to be compelled to refer to two such instances to prove impartiality? But even here the gentleman is mistaken. As he thought proper to bring up these two offices in a grave argument in Congress to prove that, in the appointment of officers, this Administration had no respect to party, I addressed a note of inquiry to Mr. Kendall, and here is his answer: He says Col. Taylor was appointed postmaster on the — day of —, 1826, three years before the commencement of General Jackson's first term.

[Here Mr. French rose to explain, and said that he had been led into the error by information which he had received in Clark county, where he was well acquainted; that he had not intentionally made the misstatement; but, upon inquiry of Mr. Kendall, he had found that Mr. Thomas Edminson had also been appointed to a post office, who was an opposition man; so that, although he was mistaken as to Col. Taylor, yet he was right as to the number.]



MR. ALLAN proceeded. Sir, I am very sure that the statement in regard to Col. Taylor's appointment was made under a mistake; and I take this occasion, with great pleasure, to bear witness that my colleague is incapable of making an intentional misstatement on this or any other subject. Yet it appears to me, in fairness, the gentleman ought to have stated that Mr. Edmonson and Mr. Pace lived in the same house, at different times, and had been appointed for the same office, and that there was no Jackson man at the place to appoint. I am informed by Mr. Kendall that this office was discontinued last fall, because no one would have it. The whole income of the office, for the year 1835, was \$17. So that the only case that the diligent researches of my friend could find to prove that this Administration had reduced to practice, in good faith, the advice which General Jackson gave to President Monroe, is the bestowal of a country post office, where no one lived but the postmaster, that was worth five dollars and sixty-one cents per annum!!! being 33 per cent. on \$17. As to Col. Taylor, the liberality was not in the appointment, but in the forbearance to turn him out; and this forbearance is owing to the fact that there is no one of "the party" at Colebyville to take the place of the present incumbent.

Now that the office at Pace's has been abandoned, my colleague must turn his admiration to the signal forbearance practised towards Col. Taylor as the remaining monument left to illustrate the liberality of this Administration, and to prove that "*the Chief Magistrate of a great and powerful nation acts for the whole, and not for a part of the community.*"

The only post office in Clark county that was profitable when "the party" came into power, was held by Mr. J. B. Duncan, a gentleman of the very first respectability, and perfectly well qualified; whose unoffending and amiable manners enabled him to discharge the duties of the office to the entire satisfaction of all parties. Mr. Duncan, during the late war, shouldered his rifle, and fought in the battles of his country. My colleague has known Mr. Duncan intimately for more than twenty years, and will not deny the statement I have made concerning him. He will go farther; he will agree that there is not a more worthy man in the county of Clark, nor one better qualified for the office, than Mr. Duncan. He will agree that there is not an officer in the United States who gave more universal satisfaction in the discharge of the duties of his office than did Mr. Duncan. But Mr. Duncan had committed the unpardonable sin of having voted against the President, and for this sin he was punished by removal from office, and a worthy young man placed in the office, as a reward for the partisan services of influential relatives.

Now that the committee have the whole of the facts on the subject, they can judge how far the post office patronage in the county of Clark was used, *regardless of party and party spirit.*

All others, except my colleague, had prudently passed in silence the letter of the President to the Tennessee Legislature, but he has thought proper to reproduce that letter; where General Jackson states, in substance, that, if important appointments continue to devolve on members of Congress, *corruption will become the order of the day.* Since which time, as President, he has appointed such a large number of members of both Houses to the highest offices, as to draw between five and six hundred thousand dollars from the Treasury for their salaries. This inconsistency between profession and practice being so glaring as to deter all other debaters from attempting to reconcile them, did not in the least stay the zeal of my colleague in his determination to defend the Administration at all points. And to get out of the difficulty, he said:

"Suppose, Mr. Chairman, General Jackson, in that letter, had suggested to the Legislature of Tennessee an amendment to the Constitution, by which the President of the United States should be deprived of having any voice in the passage of laws by Congress, by which the power that now makes it his duty to approve and sign bills passed by Congress before they have the force of laws should be taken away forever. Suppose, also, the General, after having given this opinion, had been elected President of the United States, and that he had refused to approve

and sign bills passed by Congress, upon the ground that he had given to the Legislature of Tennessee the opinion that the President ought not to have such power. Sir, in the case supposed, the President would have been impeached and removed from office, if he had refused to approve and sign bills upon the ground stated, when, by the Constitution, it was his sworn duty to do so; he would have deserved impeachment and removal from office. What, then, I ask, is the difference in principle between the case supposed and the case in the letter? The amendment suggested in the letter has never been made to the Constitution."

Thus spoke my colleague, and if he really can see any similitude between the case supposed and the *profession* in the letter, I will not stop to reason with him, as it is not probable that another person can be found who will be able to discover the most remote resemblance.

The gentleman went on to say:

"By the Constitution members of Congress are eligible to Executive appointments. 'The President is sworn 'to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution,' as it is not as he would have it to be. If, then, the President had introduced in practice what would have been a virtual amendment to the Constitution itself, he would have been guilty of the high crime of usurpation."

It is true the President cannot appoint any one who is ineligible; but I never heard before that eligibility created any obligation on the President to appoint members of Congress to office, and that his failure to do so would amount to the high crime of usurpation, for which he ought to be impeached and removed from office. But as my friend is in the secrets of the Cabinet, and if this constitutional interpretation is entertained there, and the President drew so largely on both Houses of Congress and the Treasury under the terrors of impeachment, it will certainly justify him in the eyes of my colleague, and all others who understand the Constitution as he understands it.

The gentleman contends that the President could not, with propriety, refuse to appoint members of Congress to office until the Constitution was changed so as to render them ineligible! The President was of opinion that the practice of appointing members of Congress to high offices would destroy the purity and independence of the Legislature, and make corruption the order of the day. Now my friend contends that the President was bound to continue a practice attended with those consequences until he was prevented by a change of the Constitution!

If every thing may with propriety be done to make corruption the order of the day that is not prohibited by the Constitution, the Administration has a broad field to move in. It is probably the first time under the sun that the introduction of corruption into the administration of the Government was justified on the ground that it was not prohibited by the Constitution. The gentleman says the President was sworn to support the Constitution; and as members of Congress were eligible to office under that instrument, it would have been a dangerous assumption of power on the part of the President to have excluded them. If every body is to have office who is eligible, we shall have a goodly number of them. But I suppose the gentleman confines his notion of eligibility to "his party." It was not at all unconstitutional to proscribe and render ineligible every man in and out of Congress in the United States who had not given in his adhesion at the footstool of power; but it would have been very unconstitutional for the President to have refused to appoint partisan members of Congress to office. If this be enforcing the Constitution the President has fully administered, he has marched platoons out of both Houses of Congress, as was once observed by the gentleman from Ohio, (Mr. CORWIN.) There is something, no doubt, very pleasant in this idea of administering the Constitution to a member of Congress of the right faith who stands on the roll of promotion, for this kind of luck goes round so fast that it will not take it long to reach every one. And when it comes to the turn of my colleague, I have no doubt that he will think it more constitutional than ever.

The gentleman eulogizes the Administration for the vast sums of money which it has expended in works of internal improvement since the year 1820. Sir, how will

the people of Kentucky feel when they know that a member from that State rose upon this floor, and vaunted the praises of this Administration for the profuse outpour of millions for works of internal improvement, of all sorts, in all parts of the Union except Kentucky—when they recollect that they were told, in the midst of this profusion, that the pitiful sum of \$150,000 could not be spared for a Kentucky road until the national debt was paid!

It is amusing to hear a controversy in this House between two of "the party" upon the much agitated question, "what are the principles of this Administration?" From parts of the Union where internal improvements are unpopular, we hear gentlemen praising the Administration for having subverted the whole system; while equal praise is bestowed from sections of the Union where such works are in favor, upon the orthodox opinions and lavish expenditures of the present Administration in the advancement of the great cause of public improvements. I do not know which swelled the note of admiration to the highest key, the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. GARLAND,) because the President had overthrown, or my colleague, because he had upheld internal improvements.

[Mr. GARLAND rose to explain, and said he did not intend to convey the idea that the President had entirely crushed internal improvements. He wished to be understood as saying the President had done much to overthrow such works, but that he had not gone the full length of the Virginia doctrine.]

Mr. ALLAN proceeded. Sir, the explanation does not affect the sense of what I was saying. The gentleman from Virginia exults that so much has been done to destroy, while the gentleman from Kentucky exults that so much has been done to build up the system.

My colleague says that the vast sums which this Administration has expended "on works of internal improvement are not local, but national in their character." In the true spirit of non-committal, in which school by the way he is not a very young scholar, my colleague said he would not undertake to say whether the Maysville road and the Louisville canal were local or national improvements. Now I regret to hear my friend say that the new roads in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Maine, &c. on which hundreds of thousands have been expended, were national, while he stands in a state of non-committal as to the nationality of a Kentucky road. I regret to hear the gentleman vindicating the national character of improvements which this Administration has made at the mouths of creeks which he can with difficulty find on the maps, while he will not say whether the Louisville canal, along which half the commerce of the whole Union passes, is local or national. I can very well remember a time when the gentleman and his political friends in Kentucky thought the Maysville road a national improvement. When the news arrived in that State of the passage of the Maysville road bill through both Houses of Congress, the gentleman and his friends were filled with joy, and they exultingly proclaimed from the house-tops that the new Administration had already done more for Kentucky than ever had been done. And just in the flood tide of their rejoicings came another mail, and brought the veto, which did not at all abate their joy; they faced about, and said the veto was certainly the greatest act that ever was performed in the tide of time, always excepting the battle of New Orleans.

On the subject of the extravagant expenditures of this Administration the gentleman has had before him the tables in my speech for two months, and I am happy to find that he has not denied the accuracy of a single figure in them. I proved that the expenditure from the 1th of March, 1829, to the 1th of March, 1837, will exceed the expenditure for the preceding eight years by the sum of \$15,116,631 47. Not being able to find any inaccuracy in my tables, he seeks to evade their force by making calculations for different periods of time. But, after all his calculations, he does not deny the increase of expenditure during this Administration of over forty-five millions of dollars; which he has undertaken to excuse and defend, and to prove that an increase was unavoidable from the growth of the country.

The gentleman has entirely changed over since the year 1828, when he was electioneering for the office of

elector; he told the People that the expenses of the Federal Government were too high, and ought to be brought down to the scale of Jeffersonian economy. Now in 1836, when the gentleman's party is in the receipt of the spoils, he tells the People that so far from reducing, it is necessary that the increasing expenditures should keep pace with the growth of the country. It now appears that what he told them in 1828 was a mistake. When I was listening to the gentleman's discourses in 1828 upon economy and reform, I little thought of ever standing by his side in this Hall, and seeing him the advocate of increasing the expenses of this Government in proportion to the increase of the population and resources of the nation. Did not the gentleman know in 1828 that the numbers and wealth of the nation would increase? Why did he not then tell the People that it would be necessary for Gen. Jackson's Administration to increase the public expenses in proportion to the growth of the nation? The case being altered, alters the case. "The party" was then seeking power, and to talk of reform and retrenchment was the way to get it. Now that they have power, the way to get spoils is to increase expenditure.

The gentleman, with great apparent satisfaction, produced the number of Indian treaties and the quantity of land purchased from them, as evidences of the diplomatic skill of this Administration. There is nothing new in this: the business of buying land from the Indians has been carried on for a long time. But I agree that this Administration has introduced several new practices, which I regret my friend did not tell of while he was on the subject; but as he has failed to do so, I will endeavor to supply what he has omitted. The treaties with the Indians for their lands were formerly made for the benefit of the country: now, much of the benefit is reserved as a means of patronage to reward partisans for political services. In almost all of the treaties with the Indians for cessions of their lands, large reservations are made to particular chiefs and headmen of the best parts of the territories ceded, in fee simple, with power to such chiefs and headmen to sell the same to such persons as the President or his agents shall agree may buy. No one can purchase against the consent of the President. So that the occupation of cheating the Indians out of these reservations is exclusive.

We have seen large portions of the public lands brought into conflict with the public liberty, by being, under the forms of treaties, drawn into the vortex of governmental patronage. We have also seen eleven millions of acres, the common property of all the States, distributed by partial legislation to six of them; while the pioneers of Kentucky, the founders of the great Western Empire, who bore the winter's cold and the summer's heat, and stood firm for a score of years in the front of a hundred battles, are most unjustly deprived of any share in the public domain, which is the fruit of their victories.

The gentleman eulogized the Administration, especially, for the new system of removing the Indians. This novelty being a total departure from the benevolent policy of Washington, and all of his successors, has to be tested by time and experience, before we can judge correctly of its wisdom. This Administration has undertaken to move the numerous tribes to the same territory. There have already been removed 31,348 Indians, and 72,181 are yet to be removed, making in all 103,529. What will be the result of placing so many tribes near together, with their fierce passions roused to the highest point of resentment, from having been forced to leave the land and graves of their fathers, where, by their union and their wrongs, they can learn their strength, time will show.

In addition to the removed Indians, there are of the indigenous tribes, within striking distance of the frontier, 150,311; so that, altogether, there will be a body of 253,870. We are bound to take part in all the wars that may occur among these numerous hostile bands, or which may occur between any of them and Mexico; for we have agreed by treaty to protect and defend the removed Indians, and to prevent all the Indians within our borders from making war over the Mexican line. The fruit of this Indian-driving policy, so far, does not argue much good for the future. It has already cost us several millions of money, and produced three wars. The Black



Hawk war cost \$1,237,173; it is estimated that the Florida war will cost \$5,000,000; and what the Creek war will cost, we cannot tell. We have this session appropriated \$1,000,000 to enable Gen. Gaines to keep peace on the frontier. We have been compelled to add two regiments of mounted dragoons to the regular army, and to pass a bill authorizing the President to raise a provisional army of 10,000 volunteers, and the commanding General has written for an increase of the regular army to 20,000 men. The new relations of the numerous tribes will, it is anticipated, produce a general Indian war. These are some of the fruits which have already ripened, by driving the Indians to despair. In fifty years, if this system does not cost a hundred millions of dollars and fifty thousand lives, we shall get off better than many anticipate. I hope for the best, and shall rejoice if all the good comes of it that its friends anticipate.

The gentleman brought forward, also, a great many foreign treaties, and the amount of indemnity secured thereby, with as much exultation, as if the art of treaty-making was a very late discovery. If the honorable member had extended his diplomatic researches a little further back, and looked into the treaties with Spain, England, Denmark, and many others, he would have found a greater amount of indemnity secured to our citizens than that of which he boasts.

To prove that we are passing rapidly from a paper money currency to one of the precious metals, the gentleman has produced the amount of coinage at the mint during the different years it has been in operation. Now, sir, I wonder if my friend does, in sober seriousness, intend to convey the idea to the People that the coinage at the mint increases the amount of gold in the country, or adds a cent to the national wealth? Does he intend to give the Administration credit for working the mines? This would be even worse than the credit claimed for the payment of the national debt. The amount of gold and the payment of the public debt depended on the same cause—the industry of the People. In place of introducing a metallic currency, this Government surrendered its constitutional control over the subject into the hands of the States; and the national circulating medium being thereby destroyed, the necessity was imposed on the States of supplying its place in the best manner they could. And now, when banks are springing up as fast as mushrooms, when paper money is overspreading the land beyond any former example, my colleague gets up here, in defence of “his party,” and holds up the tables of coinage, to show his constituents that a golden era is about to commence, and that paper money is near its end!

Sir, after the gentleman has informed himself of the present condition of the public money and the currency, I am astonished that he, in the character of a public sentinel, announces to the People that all is well. Does he not know that the fact has been announced by a distinguished leader in his party in public debate, that if the Land bill were to pass, and the deposit banks were called on to pay the public money, it would not only break the whole of them, but cause an explosion in the whole paper system of the United States?

The gentleman has admitted that the public money is under the control of no law; he cannot be ignorant that it is loaned out, without interest, to persons of whom he has no knowledge. He knows that the notes of the deposit banks will not circulate a day's journey from their vaults. He knows that there is a general depreciation; that there are broker's shops in every town and village; that a traveller across the Union has to submit to have his money shaved every day's ride. He knows that the broker will levy a heavy tax on the labor of the country while this miserable condition of the currency lasts. At this very time the notes on the New York banks are shaved in this city, and the notes issued here undergo the same operation there. In many places the People are compelled to pay five and six per cent. to procure notes on the United States Bank.

In this condition of things, when the laboring man is continually subject to be robbed of his labor, when the public money is placed in banks where it is admitted they

will break if they are called on to pay, I repeat that I am astonished that the gentleman's zeal in defence of his party should prevent him from appraising his constituents of the impending danger.

The combined influence of our free institutions, the industry and enterprise of the People, the introduction of labor-saving machinery, the establishment of manufactories, modern roads and steam power, and the high price of our products in Europe, have enabled this young gigantic nation to make such advances to wealth, and power, and prosperity, as to astonish the world. The great result of the combination of all these causes the gentleman, in the prevailing spirit of man-worship, ascribes to “the Government,” and produces the tables of exports and imports to show the wonders which he has done for the country. The People are nothing—our ruler is every thing. It is him who makes gold plenty, who pays off the national debt, who raises our exports and imports, and regulates the amount of the cotton crop in the South. The gentleman seems perfectly willing to strip from the People the trophies of their industry, enterprise, and genius, and place them upon the standard of the chieftain under whom it is “a sufficient glory to serve.”

The gentleman admits that the public money is now under the control of no law whatever, and has arraigned the Senate and the minority of this House for it. Has the gentleman forgotten who it was that took the public money out of the custody of the law? But he imputes fault to the Senate and the minority of this House for not passing a new law to reclaim the public treasure. If the gentleman had looked through this subject, it is the very last one that he would have alluded to. On the 21th of June, 1831, a bill passed this House to regulate the deposit of the public money in certain State banks, which the minority of this House generally voted against, and which the Senate laid on the table. Now, as the honorable member thought proper to arraign others for not passing this bill, he ought to have given his opinion either for or against it. I am very sure he will never venture to say that bill ought to have passed, for it contains some of the most objectionable provisions of any bill that was ever before Congress. But why did not the gentleman tell all, while he was on the subject? At the same session the Senate passed a bill on the same subject, which this House did not act on. And further, at the last session a bill was again introduced into this House, and so soon as the minority offered some salutary amendments which the majority did not like, and which they did not choose to take the responsibility of voting against, they refused to act further on the subject. So that the majority of this House not only refused to pass the bill sent here by the Senate in 1831, but refused to act on the bill of the last session, which they had originated themselves. This session has nearly passed away, and the majority has voted down repeated motions of the minority to take up the subject. So that the same party that took the money out of the custody of the old law, has refused to make a new law to take it out of the hands of those who hold it against all law.

But the gentleman says that this Administration has showered blessings and benefits upon Kentucky in rich profusion. When he came to this part of his speech, I listened with all anxiety to hear what kind of commodities the blessings consisted of which had been bestowed by this Administration upon Kentucky, as I never had heard of any before. My friend, with all imaginable gravity, without moving a single muscle of his face in sympathy with the general smile that went round the Hall upon the occasion, announced that this Administration had appointed to office Messrs. Amos Kendall, William T. Barry, Thomas P. Moore, Robt. B. McAfee, and a long list of other Kentuckians! These are the blessings. A few men have got high offices and large sums of money. How this verifies the French saying—“that party excitement is the madness of the many for the benefit of the few.” Here are the benefits which the People of Kentucky have derived from all the party conflicts, from all the divisions and heart-burnings among them, which have occurred in the last eight years. We were formerly taught that Government was instituted for the advantage of the People. But

my friend eulogizes the Government for the benefits which it has bestowed on public officers. I complain that the Government will not expend a fair proportion of the public revenue to assist the People of Kentucky to make improvements: that the Government will not divide the money which is now idle in the Treasury for the benefit of the great body of the working men of Kentucky who have no office, and who desire no office; and my friend says that my complaints on these subjects assail "his party;" and he answers me, as a full set-off to all the injury done the People by keeping them out of their just rights, that a large share of the spoils have been divided among the leading partisans in Kentucky. Does the gentleman suppose that Kentucky will be willing to compromise principle, and sell the rights of the People to buy offices for leading men? My friend has truly explained the principle of party action, the plain English of which is, the art of getting and keeping money and office; and he gives a fair account of the loaves and fishes which have fallen to the share of political aspirants in Kentucky, from the table of this Administration, while he has not been able to find a crumb that has fallen to the lot of the People. In taking a review of the blessings of this bountiful Administration, which have flowed in such copious streams into the pockets of the office-holders, the gentleman rebukes me for complaining that the expenses of the Government have swelled up to such a height of extravagance.

Sir, I will not go for the office-holders; I will stand by the laboring men of the nation, who are the bone and sinew of the land, whose industry is the source of your national wealth and prosperity, and to protect which ought to be the first care of every patriot and statesman.

When the general appropriation bill for the supply of the army of public officers with their large salaries was before the House, amounting to between two and three millions of dollars, my friend from Virginia (Mr. MERCER) proposed an amendment to appropriate the surplus revenue for the use of the People. My colleague voted for the previous question, and cut off this amendment for the benefit of the People, because, he said, if the appropriation for the People was placed in the bill that contained the appropriations for the officers, and the bill should be vetoed, it would cause an *interregnum* in the Government. Now, as the money is the main object, my friend is perhaps right in supposing that an *interregnum* would occur if the pay was stopped; therefore my friend thought it best not to put the spoils of the officers in the same bill with the appropriation for the People, lest all might fall together. This was the very reason why I desired to see both provisions in the same bill. I have in the last seven years seen so many excesses committed on the rights of the People, and the ancient institutions of the country, by a fat stall-fed Government, that I would be willing to starve it until I could count its ribs, and until it consented to give up the public money which it holds contrary to law, and divide the same among the States. I will here leave my colleague, with undiminished good will, and we shall part with very different feelings. While he is rejoicing at the flush condition of the pockets of the political leaders of his party in Kentucky, I am left in regret, because his "party" has defeated the passage of every law for the benefit of the People of Kentucky. I leave him, sheltered under the ægis of power, secure as one of its defenders, and will proceed myself in its face, sure of its vengeance, to point out its abuses, and array its usurpations before the country. In this I occupy my old position. Being indebted to the People for the political honors which they have conferred upon me in the last twenty-five years; having been so long sustained by their firmness and intelligence against all the assaults of power, against all the detraction of enemies, I feel bound by the highest sense of duty, and the deepest feelings of gratitude, to continue, at every personal hazard, to defend their constitutional rights. I have never sought office under Executive power, State or National; I am under no obligation and owe no allegiance to any earthly authority but that of the People.

In supporting the proposition to reduce the expenses of the Government, I shall urge the considerations which connect it with power and patronage more than those

which relate to economy. I would rather commence the work of cutting down Executive power by rendering members of Congress ineligible to Executive appointments; by abridging the veto power and the power of removal, and by disconnecting the Executive and the Treasury and the public press; but, as the opportunity of voting on these propositions is now denied me, I will agitate the question of the curtailment of power in an effort to reduce expenditure.

I shall proceed to show how retrenchment will reduce power, and in what manner it will have a tendency to change the Government back from a Government of men to a Government of laws. Your army of public officers draw such enormous sums from the Treasury that they would be able at any time of emergency, by devoting fifteen or twenty per cent. on the amount of their salaries, to raise a fund sufficiently large to enable them to distribute thousands to carry elections. The reduction of these exorbitant salaries would certainly to that extent impair the power of the General Government which is thus brought into conflict with the freedom of the elective franchise. It is high time to admonish these officers, by reducing their pay, to leave elections to the People, and stay in their offices and attend to their duties. The members of Congress, when they see the general tendency to extravagance, and the evil effects of it, ought to be willing to commence with themselves, and set the example, by reducing their own compensation. In this way, they will afford the most convincing proof of their desire of carrying the Government back to republican simplicity and frugality. In showing a willingness to share the fate of others, they can, with a greater probability of success, urge a general system of retrenchment and reform in the public expenses. If we pass the amendment which I have offered, it will reduce the expenses of the Government more than a million of dollars annually; and, if we are to have as many wars as the gentleman at the head of the Committee of Ways and Means has discoursed about, they will furnish additional reasons for saving money. I hope all the officers of the Federal Government, from the President down, will be willing to give up a part of their salaries to pay the poor soldiers for fighting our battles.

But there is still another more important view of the subject. The salaries of the federal officers are so far above those paid by the States, that it will not be possible for the State Governments to maintain their proper influence and weight in the Confederacy. This central magnificent power rises up with honors and emoluments that so far overshadow the States, that they are sunk into provincial obscurity. This central agency contains the high sources of attraction. Hence the thronging thousands that continually crowd the streets of this capital, to solicit power and money at the President's palace. Here is one great source of the President's dangerous power—the vast multitude over whose minds and freedom of thought he exercises control; for absolute submission to all the requirements of party is known to be the price of success.

To cure these evils, to restore and build up the power of the States, to revive the independence of thought and action, let us cut down federal honors and federal salaries to the size of those of the States; let us make official employments about as profitable as the common pursuits of life, then men will not be tempted to quit the service of the States, and the independence and freedom of private stations, and become courtiers at the foot-stool of federal power.

Sir, we have raised a portion of our public officers too far above the People. They have been elevated to a point of exaltation where human vanity becomes giddy, and forgetful of the rightful source of power. Our head men, upon their six thousand dollars per annum, by their eagerness to adopt the manners of European aristocracy, have forgotten the plain republican style of living of American citizens. The President and five of his home ministers receive as much as the Governors of the twenty-four States. The twenty-four Governors preside over the concerns of fifteen millions of people, their duties extending to all the complicated relations of life; while the duty of this central agency is restricted to general superintendence. Yet



the amount of compensation seems to be increased in proportion as the labor is less. Five home and one foreign minister receive more than the chief justices of the twenty-four States; yet the labor of these six ministers is but a drop in the ocean in comparison to the duties performed by the twenty-four judges. The President alone receives as much as the Governors of sixteen of the States.

It appears, from the secret history of the debates in the Federal Convention, that Doctor Franklin was of opinion "that the Executive should receive no salary, stipend, or emolument for the devotion of his time to the public service, but that his expenses should be paid." The great experience and sagacity of Franklin enabled him to foresee what has already come to pass, that, if a princely support was provided for the President, an example would be set in his style of living which would be followed by all subordinate officers, until extravagance and degeneracy would ruin the public service. President Washington seems to have entertained the same views; he refused to receive any compensation for his services above his expenses; and his plain, republican style of living is well described in the memoirs of the celebrated Chateaubriand, who visited Washington in 1791. He says: "A little house, of the English construction, resembling the houses in its neighborhood, was the palace of the President of the United States: no guards, no valets. I knocked; a servant girl opened the door." &c. How delightful and refreshing it is to turn from the scenes around us, to contemplate the profound forecast and philosophical views of Franklin, and the citizen-like simplicity of the example left us by Washington! How striking is the contrast! Now, a splendid palace towers in regal magnificence far above many of those inhabited by the monarchs of Europe; and the President's hospitality is as sumptuous as the pampered epicures who doze away a worthless existence at the courts of Asiatic despots could wish. This palace, according to the notorious *east room letter*, was, in the administration of Mr. Adams, furnished in such splendid style as to shock the sensibility of a republican. Yet this reforming Administration, not satisfied with the costly decorations which were then the theme of democratic denunciation, has expended the unexampled sum of forty-five thousand dollars in the purchase of new furniture, which throws all that preceded it far into the shade. In addition to this, the President receives an annual salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year. In attempting to make a President, we have made a monarch in fact.

In all the forms of government that have ever been tried, the Executive power has been found too strong, and, in the long run, has swallowed up all other powers. It is taking the direction here which was anticipated by many at the adoption of the Constitution; and now, in the bitterness of their disappointment, the most ardent of the original friends of a strong Executive see fast accomplishing the predictions of Patrick Henry, and many other sages of his day. Among all the votaries of liberty, it is an uncontested maxim that the superstructure of free government rests upon the division of its powers into three independent distinct departments. Mr. Jefferson's definition of despotism is the union of all the powers of Government in the same hands. Yet history furnishes no example in any free Government where the Executive power has made such advances of usurpation upon the other departments in so short a time as in the United States.

A brief contrast of the powers claimed and exercised by the Executive at the commencement of the Government, and now, will make this manifest. At first he claimed the power to remove public officers for misconduct. Now he removes them for a free exercise of the right of suffrage. At the commencement of the Government it was held to be a fundamental principle that the purse and the sword should be kept separate; now they are in the same hands. For forty years Congress exercised the right of conducting the operations of the Treasury through bank agency. But now, while the President denies to Congress the right to establish a National Bank, he appoints himself an Executive bank, composed of an association of State banks, to conduct the fiscal affairs of the Government; so that the long-contested legislative power to establish bank agency

for the Treasury has practically passed into the hands of the Executive, and he has established the most dangerous money monopoly in the world. Ever since the adoption of the Constitution it was held that Congress possessed the money power, and had authority to regulate the currency and fix the standard of value, until the President seized the public money, and issued decrees through the Treasury to regulate the currency. The power that regulates the currency is a power over the commerce, agriculture, and manufactures of the country. The power that can raise or depress the currency can tax, without limit, the labor of the People. It is customary in all the States to hold annual examinations into the condition of their treasuries. It has been the custom for committees of Congress to examine the National Treasury; but now this new Executive bank, this many-headed monster, shrinks with alarm from all scrutiny; and such is already its influence, that every proposition to examine its concerns has been voted down. This House will not trust its own eyes to open the doors and look at the actings and doings in this great political gambling shop. It is now plain that Congress will adjourn and leave its deeds shrouded in the darkness of midnight.

The veto, as formerly understood, was a negative power given to the President to enable him to defend his department from encroachment. Now it has become the active principle of legislation. The President takes the responsibility, seizes the public money, appoints a National Bank agency for the Treasury, and issues decrees to regulate the currency, and continues to exercise these high sovereign functions of legislation until two-thirds of Congress shall be found (which will never be the case while he can appoint the members to office) to take these powers out of his hands. It is thus, by the exercise of the veto, that the authority of Congress has become powerless; and the Executive has acquired dominion over the property, the labor, and the commerce of the United States, by assuming the power over the Treasury and the currency.

In tracing the advances of Executive power, nothing is more striking, than the dominion which it has acquired over the public press. The press is admitted to be the most formidable political engine of modern times. During the high and *palmy* days of true principles, the press was the faithful channel of truth—the palladium of liberty. The press then fought the battles of the Constitution; because it was paid by the community, who have not, and who do not desire office. Now we have a press in the service of the Government, organized and regulated by disciplined ambition, and gorged and fattened out of the public crib. There are, at this time, in the pay of the Government, more than one hundred editors of newspapers scattered throughout the United States. There will be paid to one press at the seat of Government near one hundred thousand dollars per annum out of the public Treasury.

There is not in Russia or Turkey a press under more despotic control. If it were to insinuate that its master was not infallible, or refuse to affirm that the most glaring abuses of power were right, or deny the guilt of every public defaulter, even if the proof were as clear as the mid-day sun; if it should suggest a doubt as to the election of the chosen successor, it would not only lose the bread upon which it is fed out of the public granary, but would be overwhelmed by party vengeance. So completely is the independence of the press bought up, that we would as soon look to see the waters of the Potomac roll back to their sources as to see this press tell the plain truth to the People. It is a part of the daily duty for which this press is paid, to misrepresent and traduce every member of Congress who opposes the encroachments of Executive power. Such a press undertakes not only to judge of the conduct of the People's representatives here, but to give evidence to the People against them. Such a witness paid such a sum for his evidence would not, in a court of justice, in a contest between two citizens for one dollar, receive credit from any honest judge or juror. It is mainly through this pensioned engine that the power of the Federal Government is brought into conflict with the freedom of elections. It is paid out of the People's money to uphold and advocate every candidate for office who is known to be on the side of power, and to defame and vilify every one who is on the

side of the country. Thousands of honest people have been deceived by this press, not knowing it was paid for every word that it uttered; and, under this deception, they have cast many faithful patriots from their service.

The important clause in the Constitution which confers upon the President the right to appoint public officers "by and with the advice and consent of the Senate," was scrupulously adhered to in the days of Washington; but of late we have seen persons appointed to office upon the responsibility of the Executive, after their rejection by the Senate. We have seen the most important offices kept vacant for years, to the detriment of the public interest, because the persons first nominated were not confirmed. We have seen an effort made to have the journal of the Senate destroyed, which recorded for the benefit of the present generation, and for the benefit of posterity, a signal instance of Executive usurpation. Of all the wounds which have been made on the guards of liberty, none is more alarming than that which has been inflicted on the Senate. The hue and cry has been raised against that body, and rung along all the lines of patronage, because it made a stand against the encroachments which were demolishing its constitutional rights. We have seen Executive power exerted with lamentable success in changing this constitutional check into an effective auxiliary.

The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. BELL) remarked that none of our early writers on the dangers of Executive power foresaw that the Post Office Department would become the most extensive and dangerous means of patronage; neither did they anticipate that the public money would be used to subsidize the press; which exercises more influence on public opinion than even the Post Office with its thirty thousand dependents and agents scattered throughout the United States; but, both taken together, make the most formidable and dangerous political engine that exists in the world.

From this rapid sketch of the present outline of Executive power, it is evident that there is but one man in the Republic. Every other office, every other interest is lost in the shoreless ocean of his power. Every officer, State or national, from the highest down to the lowest, is elected in reference to his opposition or adherence to the President or the candidate for the Presidency. This is not wonderful, because the President does, in fact, hold in his hand the Executive and Legislative power of the country. The expanded dimensions of Executive power leave no room for liberty to breathe in. The office is too high, too attractive for human weakness. The temptation to arrive at it is too great for human virtue. In the contests for this office the country will be sacrificed, and liberty overthrown. Behold the formidable array of power that is now brought to bear on the Presidential election; the whole patronage of the Federal Government; the forty thousand public officers; the machinery of the Post Office Department; a pensioned press; the numerous army among whom the public money is loaned out!

Every aged man can remember when the Executive power was confined within the limits of the Constitution, that the Presidential elections were quiet, orderly, and fair; but now the whole country is convulsed in the scramble which is to divide the offices and money among those who succeed in placing their chief in possession of more power than is exercised by any of the modern kings in the south of Europe. If the morals of the people were made of adamant, they would in time be worn away by the perpetual stream of corruption, in which unchastened ambition will ever attempt to swim to this highest prize of distinction—the Presidential office. The experience of all other free nations has proven that elections are the point in the fortress of liberty where usurpation and corruption make their first attack. The arts of political aspirants, who were willing to sell their souls and betray their country to satiate unholly ambition, have caused elections every where to result in corruption.

I will bring forward a few illustrations from Roman history. In the pure days of the Republic, the Roman magistrates were fairly elected by the qualified voters; men of the highest talents, the most approved experience and sterling integrity, were called into the public service. Such

public servants conducted Rome to the highest elevation of power and glory that has ever been reached by any nation. But at last the destroyer came, and breathed the breath of corruption on elections. I will read some passages from Adams's Roman Antiquities. Under the head of candidates for office, the historian says:

"On the market-days they (the candidates) came into the assembly of the people and took their station on rising ground, whence they might be seen by all. \* \* \* When they went down to the Campus Martius at certain times, they were attended by their friends and dependents. \* \* \* They had persons likewise to divide money among the people. \* \* \* There were also persons to bargain with the people for their votes. \* \* \* and others in whose hands the money promised was deposited. Caesar pillaged the wealth of the provinces to spend it among the citizens of Rome, and gave his rapine an air of generosity."

Could an actual description convey a more distinct idea of what is passing here before our eyes than is to be found in the above extracts from Roman history?

I will read a passage from Gibbon, to illustrate the progress of corruption in Roman elections:

"The Praetorian bands maintained that the mixed multitude that thronged the streets of Rome were not the real people; that they were alike destitute of spirit and property.

"That the defenders of the State, trained to the exercise of arms and virtue, were the genuine representatives of the people, and best entitled to elect the military chief of the Republic."

And after they had murdered the Emperor Pertinax, "they ran out upon the ramparts, and with a loud voice proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of to the best bidder, at public auction."

The candidates for the Imperial power at the foot of the ramparts carried on the contest.

"Sulpicianus promised a donative of five thousand drachms (above £160) to each soldier. Didius Julianus, eager for the prize, rose at once to the sum of six thousand two hundred and fifty drachms, or upwards of £200. The gates of the camp were instantly thrown open to the purchaser, and he was declared Emperor. They placed their new sovereign, whom they served and despised, in the centre of their ranks, surrounded him on every side with their shields, and conducted him in close order of battle to the Senate house, which, after he had filled with armed soldiers, the new Emperor expatiated on the freedom of his election."

Such is the result of Roman elections. Such the manner in which Executive patronage was brought into conflict with the freedom of elections in the most renowned nation of antiquity. In our own country we have seen the office-holders attempting to dispose of the Presidency who have no better claims to speak in the name of the people than had the Roman cohorts. In place of bidding £200 to each voter, we have seen the revenues and offices of the country bid for the Presidential office to be divided out as lawful spoil among those who would bring the greatest number of votes to the polls. Our elections are taking the direction they did in Rome, and will end in the same way if we do not reduce the power of the President, and thereby take away the temptation to betray and corrupt the country to get the office. No matter what the form or the name may be, the very instant that any Government is organized, two distinct interests in society are formed—the interest of the rulers, on the one hand, and the interest of the people on the other. It is the interest of those among whom the honors and the revenues are divided, to form combinations and a "party;" to keep in their hands these honors and revenues, and to transmit them to their relatives and friends. It is the interest of the great body of the people to have a cheap and a pure Government, and that it should be administered by able and pure men. It is the interest of the office-holders to have an extravagant Government, because they reap the benefit of extravagance. And it is the interest of the head rulers, in place of having able, honest men in office, to have such as will agree to be "mere instruments."

The history of nations is nothing but a narrative of the conflicts between these two separate interests of rulers and people. On the one side there is union, discipline, art, and intrigue; on the other, honesty, unsuspecting confiding confidence. The result every where has been the



triumph of the office-holders; and, in the end, in all other nations, they have made themselves the people's masters, and become a separate hereditary order.

The long-contested question, and which is committed to the Americans for final decision, is, whether the People can maintain their free Government against the perpetual war that will be waged upon it by their own officers? I call upon the People to behold the formidable array of power with which they have to contend. Forty thousand public officers—a pensioned press—thirty-five deposit banks—a subservient post office—the multitude among whom the public money is loaned out—all combined to keep the People out of their money, and to control the Government, constitute a force more terrible than an open army with banners; because it advances secretly through by-ways, through the vaults of banks; it crawls through all the channels of corruption; and while all appears fair on the surface, while the people, active in industry and enterprise, are moving rapidly on to wealth and apparent prosperity, the subtle poison of despotism is infecting the vitals of the body politic.

In the contemplation of our public affairs, there is no aspect of them to be more regretted than the selfish personal character which the struggles for the Presidential office have communicated to party. Our early parties were formed upon a difference of principle, each contending for the country, for the whole country, for the security of liberty, for the preservation of the Constitution. Ambition was then a noble and elevated principle, which identified its success and elevation with the success and elevation of the Republic. The party now is not distinguished by the profession or the practice of any known system of principles. The art of getting and keeping money and office, and transmitting them to friends, is the principle of action. No matter what are the principles of an individual, if he will labor in the vocation of office-getting and money-getting, he is taken into full fellowship and communion with the party. Our early patriots and statesmen rose to eminence by the possession and exercise of talents, experience, and virtue—by eminent services rendered to the country. Now, love of country is changed to devotion to men: man-worship is found to be a more ready road to success than devotion to the country.

The only avenue now open to honorable distinction is submission to power. This principle of party action, upon which success now depends, is enforced upon the observance of all the members of the party, by both the precept and example of the person who now holds the second rank in the Government, and is aiming at the first. He prides himself upon, and in the spirit of exultation proclaims that "*To have served under such a Chief at such a time, and to have won his confidence and esteem, is a sufficient glory; and of that, thank God, my enemies cannot deprive me.*"

The annals of the nineteenth century do not furnish an example, in the despotisms of Asia, of such an instance of the worship of one man by another. The success of this flattery, when it is recollected that it won the Presidency, for, if that individual succeeds, no one will doubt that he will owe his success to the favor of the exalted personage under whom it was a sufficient glory to serve. The glory is not in having served his country, but in having served under a chief. The glory is not derived from services rendered Rome, but from the honor of having served under Cæsar. Here we have, in bold relief, the principle and example of the leader of the party. All aspirants will take the hint from this example of success, and must make their way to office and money by the same means. Under this system all high and honorable ambition must perish; all hope of rising to eminence, by the possession of eminent qualifications, will expire; and servile adulation and man-worship will become the order of the day. Federal power, as it now exists, is built upon this compact; all subordinates are to sustain it in all of its courses, right or wrong; and, in return, it is to throw the ægis of its protection over each member of the party, no odds what may be his official acts of omission or commission. If the spirit of the times will tolerate and justify such an example in a candidate for the first office, it will of course be followed by every one

who expects to reach the throne by the aid of governmental patronage.

We have already come to the point where every candid man will admit that the next Presidential election, so far as one of the candidates is concerned, depends on the wish of the present Chief Magistrate. Did any American expect to live to see such a wonder? Did any one imagine that an American President would so soon acquire the power to appoint his successor? Is it in the constitution of nature that man must every where seek a master, and crouch to power? Must the right of suffrage every where become a mere shadow, and the voter a mere machine? Are nations every where destined to become estates in the hands of rulers, to be transferred by hereditary descent as property from father to son?

The powerful phalanx of public officers, printers, and money borrowers, enlisted in this Presidential canvass, are in some respects in the same condition that Bonaparte's army was previous to his election as Emperor of France. Public proclamation was then made that every soldier might freely vote according to his wish; but at the same time a secret order was issued that every one who did not vote for the Emperor should be shot. Here it is said the public officers and the borrowers of the public money and the printers are free. But it is well understood that every one who does not vote and get others to vote for the already appointed successor shall, not be shot, but, if an officer, be cashiered and turned out, and, if a money borrower, must pay up. Executive power must be reduced. The confederacy that has the public money, and is fattening upon the labor of the People, must be compelled to disgorge their ill-gotten spoils. My observation here for the last five years has convinced me that a republican government cannot be preserved unless it can be made a cheap government. Liberty and frugality have never been and never will be long separated. Extravagance naturally leads to corruption, and corruption to despotism.

Sir, the adoption of the amendment which I have offered to this bill, by which the expenses of the Government would be reduced more than a million of dollars annually, would be attended with the most salutary consequences. While it would purify the Government, and reduce the power and patronage of the Executive, it would rebuke the public officers for intermeddling with elections, and bring them to a proper sense of their dependence on the People. It would revive the power and influence of the States, check the spirit of federal usurpation, and cut off the temptation that men are now under of selling their freedom of thought for office and large sums of money. It would give the Government a direction back to the republican simplicity of the days of Washington and Franklin. It would teach power to tremble in its strongholds, and re-establish the ascendancy of public opinion.

Being solemnly and deeply convinced that extensive abuses exist in the administration of the Government—that power is advancing with the rapid strides of usurpation upon the free institutions of our country—that the precious heritage of our freedom is in danger; believing that the only remedy for these evils is to be found in the public reason—I have appealed to that reason, and call upon my countrymen to rally in defence of that liberty which they hold at the price of the blood of their fathers.

The following is the proposition of retrenchment offered by Mr. ALLAN:

*And be it further enacted,* That from and after the passage of this act, instead of the compensation now allowed by law, there shall be paid to the within named officers the following sums per annum: To the Vice President of the United States, four thousand dollars; to each of the Secretaries of State, Treasury, War, and Navy, four thousand dollars; to the Attorney General, three thousand dollars; to the Postmaster General, four thousand dollars; to each of the Assistant Postmasters General, one thousand eight hundred dollars; to each of the Comptrollers of the Treasury, two thousand dollars; to each of the Auditors of the Treasury, two thousand dollars; to the Solicitor of the Treasury, two thousand dollars; to the Register of the Treasury, two thousand dollars; to the Treasurer, two thousand dollars; to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, two thousand dollars; to the

Commissioner of the General Land Office, two thousand dollars; and that there be deducted from the compensation now allowed by law to the clerks in the Departments of State, Treasury, War, and Navy, including those in the General Land Office, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum: *Provided*, No deduction shall be made so as to reduce the salary of any clerk in said Departments to a less sum than eight hundred dollars per annum.

That from all officers of the customs, by whatever name designated, or in whatever manner employed, there shall be deducted from the compensation now allowed them by law, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum; in no case shall the compensation by salary, fees, or otherwise, be permitted to exceed, of a collector, three thousand dollars per annum; of surveyors and naval officers, two thousand five hundred dollars per annum; and of weighers, gaugers, markers, appraisers, and all others connected with the collection of the customs, two thousand dollars per annum.

That from all officers connected with the system of the public lands, either as surveyors general, registers, receivers, or clerks, there shall be deducted from the compensation now allowed them by law, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum.

That from all the clerks in the General Post Office, deputy postmasters, their assistants, or clerks, there shall be deducted from the compensation now allowed them by law, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum, and in no case, by the rent-

ing of boxes in their offices, or otherwise, shall their compensation exceed three thousand dollars per annum.

That from all persons connected with the Indian department, as superintendents, agents, sub-agents, interpreters, agents for removals, commissioners, or in whatever other manner employed therein, there shall be deducted from the compensation now allowed them by law, or regulation, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum.

That to the members of the Senate, House of Representatives, and Delegates from Territories, instead of the compensation now allowed them by law, they shall receive six dollars per day, and six dollars for every twenty miles' travel to and from the seat of Government.

To the Secretary of the Senate and Clerk of the House of Representatives, instead of the compensation now allowed them by law, each two thousand dollars per annum; and there shall be deducted from the compensation now allowed to each of their assistant clerks, at the rate of twenty-five per centum per annum.

And that from and after the expiration of the present Presidential term, the salary of the President of the United States shall be fifteen thousand dollars per annum.

*And be it further enacted*, That the custom-house in the city of New York shall not cost above the sum of five hundred thousand dollars; and any law appropriating an amount above that sum to that object shall be, and the same is hereby, repealed.





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